

## **Great Blue Herons of the Salish Sea: Status and Conservation.**

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The Salish Sea represents the greater ecosystems of Puget Sound, Georgia Strait and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Here, the biologically rich land and water interface is represented by few species as completely as the great blue heron (*Ardea herodias fannini*). The heron links the marine shorelines, marshes and rivers with upland fields and forests in its annual life cycle. Although great blue herons range throughout North America, the Salish Sea harbors a distinct population and the highest concentration of breeding herons on the west coast. This concentration of great blue heron is perpetuated by productive nesting colonies scattered throughout the near-shore upland area. Monitoring and conservation of herons and their sensitive nesting colonies are an ongoing effort. The status and conservation of the Salish Sea great blue heron population will be presented by biologists from the transboundary Heron Working Group. The Heron Working Group is dedicated to the cooperative scientific study, conservation and stewardship of the great blue heron and is working together to collect and share technical information and develop guidance for the protection and perpetuation of this unique population.